



Frequently Asked Questions – Impacts to Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Properties (ICI)

Changes to the Blue Box Program – November 19, 2024

Ontario's Blue Box Program is changing how it works. Instead of the government handling recycling, producers of blue box materials (like plastic bottles and cardboard boxes) will now be fully financially and operationally responsible for collecting, processing, and recycling these materials. This is a transition called Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act (RRCEA) and upheld by Ontario Regulation 391/21: Blue Box.

Producers of blue box materials (like plastic water bottles and cardboard boxes) will now be financially and operationally responsible for the collection, processing, and recycling of these materials. With this transition, producers can work with Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) to meet their obligations. However, this new model only covers materials from eligible residential sources, excluding those from industrial, commercial, or institutional sources (there are some exceptions to this).

Starting on November 19, 2024, the District of Muskoka will transition to this new EPR model and has been working with the PRO, Circular Materials (CM), to manage this transition. As part of this change, District Council has approved continuing curbside recycling service within downtown/main street areas in Bracebridge, Huntsville, Gravenhurst, Port Carling, Bala and Honey Harbour only. All ineligible ICI properties outside of these areas will cease to receive recycling curbside collection.

1) What is considered an Industrial, Commercial, or Institutional (ICI) property?

An Industrial, Commercial, or Institutional (ICI) property is any property not designated as residential according to Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) codes. However, under the new regulation, elementary and secondary schools, as well as non-profit long-term care facilities will continue to be eligible for recycling services.

ICI properties include, but are not limited to the following:

- All private sector businesses (including Downtown core businesses)
 - Place of worship
 - Daycares
 - Campgrounds (without households)
 - Public facing and internal areas of municipal buildings/facilities (e.g., libraries, arenas)
 - Not-for-profit organizations (e.g., shelters, foodbanks)
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Industrial or commercial properties



Not-for-profit organizations



Community buildings or facilities (e.g., libraries, arenas)



Daycare



Places of worship



Campgrounds and trailer-parks (without permanent or seasonal households)



Commercial Farms

Please visit the Recycling [Eligibility Checker](#) to determine your property's eligibility.

2) How does this affect my business?

Starting November 19, 2024, the Municipality's recycling collection program will end for ICI properties outside of the Downtown/Main Street areas.

- Downtown/Main Street Routes: ICI properties will continue to receive recycling services. You can find route maps and details linked here: [BIA Route Maps](#)
- Outside Downtown/Main Street Areas: ICI properties will no longer receive curbside recycling service.

Garbage collection services will continue to be provided by The District.



For ineligible properties:

- You will need to arrange for private recycling collection services, or you can drop materials off at the nearest waste drop-off facility.

3) Why are ICI properties considered ineligible by the Province?

Waste collection (i.e., waste and recycling) from ICI locations has never been mandated for municipalities in Ontario. The District has provided this service as an added value to further support our communities. However, under the new regulations, ICI properties are not considered eligible for recycling services.

4) Why can't The District continue collecting recycling from all ICI locations outside the Downtown/Main Street area?

All municipalities in Ontario, including The District Municipality of Muskoka, will be out of the recycling business as part of the Transition to Extended Producer Responsibility. Under the new regulations, the potential costs to The District to manage recycling for all ICI properties across the District is not economically viable.

Downtown/Main Street areas will continue to receive service based on the space constraints and challenges associated with arranging for a private service. The concentrated nature of these properties also allows for efficiencies in delivering the service (i.e., units are adjacent to each other along the designated collection routes, as opposed to sporadic and disperse outside these areas).

5) What are my options for disposing of the recycling generated from my business starting November 19, 2024?

Ineligible properties can choose to:

- Contract a private contractor to collect the recycling.

The properties' occupants, owners, or managers can make private arrangements to collect and process their recycling. There are service providers and local businesses that have been preparing for this transition and are ready to offer their services. We encourage you to reach out, and find a service provider that best meets your needs

Please note that The District Municipality of Muskoka does not endorse or vouch for any of these service providers:

Company	Telephone	Website
Green for Like (GFL)	1-844-464-3587	csmuskoka@gflenv.com
Waste Connections	705-645-4453	wasteconnectionsCanada.com



Mid Ontario	705-325-555	midontariodisposal.com
YORK	705-646-1597	www.york1.com

- **From November 19, 2024 – December 31, 2025:** Transport your business recycling to any of the District’s 10 Transfer Stations, to be disposed of as commercial recycling and charged at the appropriate tipping fee. Listing of Transfer Stations, and current Fee Guide, can be accessed here – <https://www.muskoka.on.ca/en/garbage-and-recycling/drop-off-locations-and-landfill.aspx>
- **Starting January 1, 2026:** A commercial recycling service review will be undertaken to determine which waste facilities will continue to accept this material as of this date, based on usage data. Changes will be announced in advance of December 31, 2025.

6) I own/manage an apartment building; will it be impacted by this change?

Apartment buildings that are currently receiving curbside collection will continue to receive curbside recycling collection through Circular Materials.

7) I have/manage a property that has a business on the main floor and apartments above. How does the transition affect my property?

For ICI Properties within Downtown/Main Street Area:

- Blue Box materials from the residential portion of a mixed-use property will be collected on the designated residential collection day.
- ICI properties within Downtown/Main Street areas will have their waste and recycling collected on a different day. These specific arrangements are being finalized, and further communications will be sent to impacted ICI properties.

For ICI Properties outside Downtown/Main Street Area:

- Blue Box materials from the residential portion of a mixed-use property will still be collected.
- Materials from the commercial portion of the property will be ineligible for collection. The collection contractor will make the distinction between residential and commercial materials.

8) What do I do with my business’s recycling boxes?

The municipality will not retrieve any recycling boxes. You may repurpose the boxes as you wish.





9) How is The District Municipality of Muskoka helping businesses during this transition?

The District Municipality of Muskoka acknowledges the concerns and criticisms regarding the exclusion of ICI Blue Box materials from the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model. Here's how Muskoka's administration is helping:

- **Advocacy and Support:** The District is committed to urging the province to develop practical solutions for managing ICI sector materials, either directly or through industry organizations.
- **Resolution 22/2024-PW:** The District Council has requested that the Province amend Ontario Regulation 391/21: Blue Box to make producers responsible for the end-of-life management of recycling products from all sources. This resolution reflects the District's ongoing advocacy for a more equitable approach to producer responsibility.

Muskoka's administration continues to push for changes that support businesses and ensure a fairer recycling system for all sectors.

10) Are there any subsidies available for businesses as a result of this change?

Currently, there are no subsidies available; however, the Municipality will continue to advocate on behalf of the ICI properties in Muskoka.

11) Who do I contact at the provincial level to advocate against this change?

You can always connect with your local MPP. If you are part of an industry organization, ask your board of directors for support by writing to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, for example.

12) Will The District Municipality of Muskoka still collect garbage?

The District will continue to provide curbside garbage collection to areas that currently receive this service. Garbage collection is not impacted by this new regulation and remains unchanged.

13) Why are we transitioning to the Blue Box Program?

The Ontario Government legislated changes to the Blue Box Regulation in an effort to promote a more circular economy, where materials can be collected, recycled, and reused into new products and packaging. Having producers be entirely responsible for their products in the post-consumer phase will aid in creating less overall waste, diverting waste from landfills, and mitigating environmental impacts.

14) What is a circular economy?

A circular economy is an economic system that moves away from a make-use-dispose model. Instead, it focuses on recycling and reusing materials to extend the lifecycle of products and eliminating waste. In circular economy the use of raw materials is minimized, the lifecycle of materials and resources are maximized, and waste generation and packaging are minimized.

This approach aims to create a sustainable cycle where materials are continuously reused and repurposed, reducing environmental impact and promoting resource efficiency.

15) What is Extended Producer Responsibility?

Before the transition, municipalities and producers shared the cost of collecting and processing recyclable materials equally (a 50-50 model). Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) changes this by making producers of Blue Box materials (i.e., Coca-Cola, Amazon, Walmart, etc.) fully responsible for the entire lifecycle of the materials they produce. Under EPR, producers are accountable for the logistics and financial aspects of their product packaging and, ultimately, helping to in reduce waste and promote recycling.

Relevant Links

www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/210391

www.circularmaterials.ca

July 2024 Engineering and Public Works Committee [Report PW-7-2024-5](#)
